

RETURN TO WORK STUDY

■ WHY?

◆ Public Policy

- 39-71-105 (3) A worker's removal from the workforce because of a work-related injury or disease has a negative impact on the worker, the worker's family, the employer, and the general public. Therefore, an objective of the workers' compensation system is to return a worker to work as soon as possible after the worker has suffered a work-related injury or disease.

◆ An objective measure of outcome for injured workers

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■ HOW?

- ◆ Match WC claim information against pre and post injury unemployment insurance wages, to contrast and compare wage and duration
- ◆ Rand Corporation study of New Mexico as a model
 - An Evaluation of New Mexico Workers' Compensation Permanent Partial Disability and Return to Work,
http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1414/
- ◆ John Burton to review our results

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■ WHAT?

- ◆ Work Comp claim information from our database
 - ◆ Lost time claims since 1997, from WCAP
- ◆ Unemployment Insurance
 - ◆ Quarterly wages of Montana employees since 1997, from MISTICS

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■ OBVIOUS LIMITATIONS

◆ Only employment within Montana

- We will not have wage data on employees who move out of state to return to work.

◆ Identification of lost time claims

- Insurers are to report indemnity and medical benefit payments every 6 months from date of injury on lost time claims. To the extent that those reports do not exist in our system, we will not identify a claim as lost time.

◆ Others

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- We are just beginning to gather and analyze the data.

- ~~promises~~

- Questions, comments, thoughts, suggestions?